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Topic 1: Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto and The Pearl Harbor Attack

**General Overview**

**Isoroku Yamamoto was born on April 4th, 1884, in Nagaoka, Japan, and died on April 18th, 1943, in the Solomon Islands. He was a well-known Japanese navy commander who was the mastermind behind the surprise attack on the US naval facility at Pearl Harbor.**

**Yamamoto studied at Harvard University and the Naval Air Corps' Technological Division. He was wounded in battle during the Russo-Japanese War in the Battle of Tsushima. Yamamoto steered the Japanese navy towards aircraft carrier tactics, which he integrated into the Pearl Harbor assault plan. Admiral Mitsutoshi Yamamoto was the top seagoing admiral in the Japanese fleet. He advocated for war with the United States after Japan's disastrous choice to conquer Southeast Asia.**

**His Pearl Harbor attack, intended to prevent a long fight, instead contributed to a prolonged and complete war. Admiral Mitsutoshi Yamamoto was Japan's most important naval officer during World War II. He was shot down on Bougainville Island in April 1943, while on an inspection trip of Japanese sites in the South Pacific. His contribution to naval strategy was his early awareness of the usefulness of carrier-based aircraft in long-range strikes.**

**To sum up, the attack on Pearl Harbor took place on December 7th 1941. 353 Imperial Japanese aircraft from six aircraft carriers assaulted the facility. All eight US Navy warships present were damaged, with four being destroyed. Pearl Harbor attack on December 7, 1941, was an unannounced attack by Japan on the United States. 2,403 Americans were killed and 1,178 injured; Japanese casualties were minimal. The attack was eventually declared a war crime in the Tokyo Trials because it occurred without a formal declaration of war.**

**History of the Issue**

**The Japanese forces conducted a surprise attack on the United States Naval Base in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on December 7, 1941. With the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, president Franklin Delano Roosevelt requested and won a declaration of war against Japan from Congress. Germany and Italy, allied with Japan, declared war on the United States on December 11, 1941.**

**Hector Bywater, a British naval expert, wrote The Great Pacific War in 1925. It was a realistic depiction of a conflict between the United States and Japan, beginning with the Japanese destruction of the US naval base. Yamamoto was convinced that Bywater's fiction could become reality when Britain's Royal Air Force successfully attacked the Italian fleet at Taranto on November 11, 1940.**

**The United States intercepted a Japanese communication on December 6, 1941, inquiring about ship movements and berthing locations at Pearl Harbor. The cryptologist sent the information to her boss, who promised to contact her on Monday, December 8. On Sunday, December 7, a radar operator on Oahu noticed a huge number of planes moving toward the island on his screen. After flying over Oahu, Captain Mitsuo Fuchida delivered the code word, «Tora, Tora, Tora,» to the Japanese fleet to indicate the Americans had been caught off guard.**

**The Japanese intended to issue a declaration of war to the United States before the attack began in order to avoid violating the first article of the Hague Convention of 1907, but the message was delayed and not communicated to US Navy ships, including eight battleships. The three aircraft carriers of the United States Pacific Fleet were on drills at sea. The Japanese were unable to find them and were forced to return home with the Americans.**

**He first assisted his mortally wounded captain, then manned a machine gun he was unfamiliar with, successfully destroying two Japanese aircraft. For his actions during the attack, he became the first African American to be awarded the Navy Cross, the service's highest honor.**

**The strike cost the Japanese 29 planes and 5 midget submarines. One Japanese soldier was captured, while 129 other Japanese troops were killed. Only one Japanese ship, the Ushio, survived the attack on Pearl Harbor and was stationed at Yokosuka Naval Base until the conclusion of the war. When Admiral Yamamoto saw that his troops had not destroyed the US navy, he worried that the US, with its immense economic capacity, would quickly regroup and strike again.**

**Major Parties Involved:**

**Imperial Japanese Navy Air Service (IJNAS):**

The Imperial Japanese Navy Air Service was the Imperial Japanese Navy's air arm. During the Pacific War, the unit was in charge of the operating of naval aircraft and the performance of aerial combat. The attack on Pearl Harbor was a surprise military strike on the United States by the Imperial Japanese Navy Air Service against the naval facility at Pearl Harbor in Honolulu.

**The Hawaii Army National Guard (HANG):**

The Hawaii Army National Guard is a branch of the United States Army and the National Guard. The Army National Guard accounts for around half of the US Army's available combat forces and one-third of its support organization on a national scale. The Ha-19, a third midget submarine, grounded twice, once outside the harbor entrance and once on the east shore of Oahu, where it was seized on December 8th. Ensign Kazuo Sakamaki swam ashore and was apprehended by Corporal David Akui of the Hawaii National Guard, becoming the first Japanese prisoner of war.

**International Christian University (ICU):**

International Christian Institution is a non-denominational private university in Mitaka, Tokyo, Japan. ICU was founded in 1949 as Japan's first liberal arts institution, thanks to the efforts of Prince Takamatsu, General Douglas MacArthur, and BOJ President Hisato Ichimada. Takeo Iguchi, a law and international relations professor at International Christian University in Tokyo, discovered documents in 1999 that revealed a fierce debate within the government over how, and indeed whether, to notify Washington of Japan's intention to break off negotiations and start a war, including a December 7 entry in the war diary that stated, "Our deceptive diplomacy is steadily proceeding toward success."

**The United States Air Force (USAF):**

The United States Air Force is the air service branch of the United States Armed Forces and one of the country's eight uniformed services. The onslaught was over ninety minutes after it began. 218 soldiers and airmen (who were part of the Army prior to the separate United States Air Force in 1947) were killed and 364 others were injured; 109 Marines were killed and 69 others were wounded; and 68 civilians were killed and 35 others were wounded. In total, 2,403 Americans were killed, with 1,143 injured.

**The Honolulu Fire Department (HFD):**

The Honolulu Fire Department is under the jurisdiction of the Mayor of Honolulu and offers fire protection and first responder emergency medical services to the City and County of Honolulu, Hawaii, United States. Nine Honolulu Fire Department (HFD) firemen were among the prominent civilian victims, having responded to Hickam Field during the bombing in Honolulu, becoming the only fire department members on US territory to be attacked by a foreign force in history.

**Key Terms**

**Aircraft Carrier:** A warship that serves as a seagoing airbase and has a full-length flight deck as well as facilities for carrying, arming, deploying, and recovering aircraft is known as an aircraft carrier. It is often the capital ship of a fleet since it allows a naval force to spread air power throughout the world without relying on local bases to stage aviation operations.

**Military Strike**: An operation to occupy a location temporarily in order to obtain data and collect intel, confound an adversary, capture troops or equipment, or destroy a capability, terminating in a scheduled departure.

**Naval Base: A naval base, navy base, or military port is a military facility where warships and naval ships dock when they are not on a mission or need to reload.**

**Navy**: The Navy maintains, trains, and equips combat-ready naval forces capable of winning wars, deterring aggression, and preserving maritime freedom.

**War Crime:** A war crime is a violation of the laws of war that gives rise to individual criminal responsibility for actions by combatants in action, such as intentionally killing civilians or prisoners of war, torturing, taking hostages, destroying civilian property unnecessarily, deception by perfidy, wartime sexual violence, pillaging, and for any individual in the command structure who orders any attempt to commit mass killings, including genocide.

**Previous Attempts to Solve the Solution**

## Racial Equality Proposal

## The Racial Equality Proposal was a Treaty of Versailles proposal discussed during the 1919 Paris Peace Conference. It was never intended to have any global connotations when it was proposed by Japan, but one was attached to it anyhow, which sparked controversy.

## In June 1919, Japanese Foreign Minister Uchida Ksai declared that the plan was not intended to demand racial equality for all colored peoples, but only for League of Nations members.

**Useful Links**

* <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Yamamoto-Isoroku>
* <https://www.britannica.com/story/attack-on-pearl-harbor-timeline>
* <https://www.census.gov/history/pdf/pearl-harbor-fact-sheet-1.pdf>
* <https://www.nps.gov/perl/index.htm>
* <https://www.history.com/topics/world-war-ii/pearl-harbor>
* [cases | International Criminal Court (icc-cpi.int)](https://www.icc-cpi.int/cases)
* [Result List: ICC Library Collections (ebscohost.com)](https://eds.p.ebscohost.com/eds/results?vid=1&sid=55498efd-3356-41e1-86e0-07e8dd3e4bb6%40redis&bdata=JmJxdWVyeT0mY2xpMD1GVDEmY2x2MD1ZJnR5cGU9MCZzZWFyY2hNb2RlPUFuZCZzaXRlPWVkcy1saXZl)
* [Court records and transcripts | International Criminal Court (icc-cpi.int)](https://www.icc-cpi.int/documents)

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Britannica, Encyclopædia. “Attack on Pearl Harbor Timeline.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2007, [www.britannica.com/story/attack-on-pearl-harbor-timeline](http://www.britannica.com/story/attack-on-pearl-harbor-timeline).